

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled).

2. (Canceled).

3. (Canceled).

4. (Canceled).

5. (Canceled).

6. (Canceled).

7. (Canceled).

8. (Canceled).

9. (New) A process of producing a hydrogen-absorbing alloy, said process comprising:

preparing an alloy having a composition expressed by the general formula:



where X is at least one element selected from the group consisting of Y (yttrium), lanthanoids, Pd and Pt, and each of a, b, c and d is represented, in terms of atomic %, by the relations $8 \leq a \leq 50$, $0 < b \leq 30$, $5 \leq c \leq 15$, $2 \leq d \leq 10$ and $40 \leq a + b + c + d \leq 90$, and

heat treating said alloy to convert the principal phase of the crystal structure of said alloy to a body centered cubic structure by (1) conducting solution treatment at a temperature within a range of from 700 to 1500°C for 1 minute to 100 hours followed by quenching or (2) conducting solution treatment at a temperature within a range of from 700 to 1500°C for 1 minute to 100 hours followed by quenching and aging at a temperature of from 350 to 1200°C.

10. (New) A process according to Claim 9, wherein the principal phase exists within the range where a body-centered cubic structure appears and a spinodal decomposition occurs, exclusive of a C14 single-phase region; and said principal phase has a regular periodical structure and its mean lattice constant is from 0.2950 nm to 0.3150 nm.

11. (New) A process according to Claim 9, wherein said hydrogen-absorbing alloy is in the form of a cell electrode.

12. (New) A process according to Claim 11, wherein said cell electrode has cell characteristics in the maximum discharge capacity and the capacity retaining ratio after 100 charge/discharge cycles.

13. (New) A process according to Claim 12, wherein the maximum discharge capacity is 375 to 465 mAh/g and the capacity retaining ratio after 100 charge/discharge cycles is 80 to 95%.

14. (New) A process according to Claim 9, wherein $0 < b < 30$.

15. (New) A process according to Claim 9, wherein $0 < b < 20$.

16. (New) A process according to Claim 9, wherein $10 \leq b \leq 20$.